

of God. The question of their salvation has been not a little agitated; and most seem to hope that though their sin was punished by this awful display of the divine judgment, mercy was extended to their souls. For my own part, I think their sin was what the Apostle calls a sin unto death, 1 John v. 10, a sin which must be punished with temporal death, or the death of the body, while mercy was extended to the soul. It was right, in this infant state of the church, to show God's displeasure against deceit, fraud and hypocrisy—but because they had not the ordinary respite, we may presume that God extended mercy to them, though cut off almost in the act of sin." Note on Acts v. 10.

The preceding are strongly marked examples, illustrating the force of the question, *Can you apply it?* Reasoning in relation to an abstract theory, all Dr. Clarke's power of mind and extensive learning was exercised in endeavoring to prove that some of our race will be doomed to an undying death in misery. But the moment a particular case was presented, his soul recoiled from applying the horrible dogma!

Judas sold his Lord for thirty pieces of silver, having betrayed him to wicked hands by the solemn sign of friendship, a kiss. Notwithstanding these and other aggravated facts, behold what effort there is made to include Judas among the ransomed of the Lord! Surely, the humane reader needs no apology for this effort—but what shall we say of the doctrine which cannot be applied in such an instance?

Absalom was guilty of the basest ingratitude, vilest treason, most unnatural rebellion—and he died miserably in all his sin. Yet Dr. Clarke believed Absalom was saved, even on the bare score of possibilities! And the simple reason is, the theory could not be applied.

Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Ghost, and were struck dead by the judgment of God; and yet, on the basis of a mere presumption, their salvation is conceded and contended for!

—I confess myself greatly pleased with these facts. They clearly indicate that the spirit of Christ is mightier than the creeds of men. And I doubt whether any one expecting a mere theorist, whose pride of opinion seeks the support of a theory at all hazards, or whose heart is as hard as the nether mill-stone, can soberly and deliberately apply the doctrine of endless damnation in any special case that can be mentioned. It may indeed be maintained in the way of general argument—but ah! the Christian soul will refuse to apply it in any given instance. Probabilities, presumptions, conjectures, and even bare possibilities, will be sought as the encouragements of hope.

It is indeed melancholy to behold pious people driven into such straits and extremities in seeking the comfort for which the spirit yearns; and yet it is also pleasing to witness the triumphs of the converted heart in its warfare with the wrongly-odded head. The latter may have its cruel, but the former will not suffer it to be so.

Suppose a Universalist were to deny or hesitate to acknowledge the salvation of Judas, Absalom, Ananias, or Sapphira—

what would be said to him? Sir, why do you hesitate to apply your theory? Are you afraid to apply it to individual cases? Is it valuable only in the way of generalities, and nothing worth in relation to particulars?

And thus we reason, in all affection, with the advocates of never-ending woe. If your doctrine be true, it is true for somebody. Why then do you shrink from the application? Is the theory too horrible? Is it to be maintained as a doctrine, and only as a doctrine?

Thus, at least, it appears to be. A pious father and mother may have a profligate son. He may live sinfully, and die in all the abandonment of crime: yet his parents will say, "He is in the hands of a merciful God; we hope to meet him in heaven." Never do they think of him as being among the howling fiends of darkness. O no—he was *their son*, and they cannot apply the doctrine to *his case*. O no.

But is not every mortal somebody's child? And shall we narrow down the genius of Christianity to the salvation of such only as are our kindred or friends?

I bless God for a Faith which answers the largest scope of Prayer: I bless Him for a Love which cannot overleap the River of Life. And all these excellencies meet and centre in a Doctrine of Salvation which every Christian Heart would rejoice to apply.

That doctrine glorifies God, and honors the Lord Jesus Christ, in affirming the final holiness and happiness of all mankind.—Whoso believeth entereth into rest. A.C.T.

UNIVERSAL AND SPECIAL.

The apostle Paul, in 1 Timothy iv. 10, declares of himself and other Christian disciples, "We labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is THE SAVIOR OF ALL MEN, especially of them who believe."

This passage is one which has long been employed by those who reject the testimony that God is the Savior of all men, as an unanswerable objection to that doctrine. "So far from Paul's teaching the salvation of all men," say they, "he took particular care to guard against any mistake in this respect, by using the qualifying word 'especially'; thereby showing that God is the Saviour only of those who believe.—This is evident as can be; for if all men are saved alike, how is it that some are specially saved? Does not the very use of this word 'especially' clearly point out the fact that all will not be saved? And does not its connection with the word 'believe,' also show that only believers will be saved?"

Such is the argument of those who accept the doctrine of a limited salvation; and not a few regard it as unanswerable, while many more look upon it as at least a serious difficulty which demands a careful consideration. But suppose we might meet the difficulty with another, as we might do, and leave the matter there?—Suppose we reply: Paul distinctly affirms that God is the "Savior of all men," and this clearly shows that he did not intend, by using the word "especially," to say that God is *not* the Savior of all men; for in so doing he would plainly contradict himself. This would be perfectly fair, and as unanswerable as the objection on the other

side. Nothing is more positive than the language of Paul in this respect; and after all that can be said about "especially," the unqualified statement still remains, that God is in some way or other, in some sense or other, "the Savior of all men." And we ask our friend of the opposite faith to explain this difficulty in the way of his position, that God is the Savior of *ONLY* those who believe.

But since the restricting and limiting power of the word "especially" is counted upon so confidently, let us examine it a little, and see what measure of force it has in this direction. The Psalmist says: "I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbors." Ps. xxxi. According to the criticism in review, the Psalmist means here that he was no reproach at all among his enemies, but a very particular reproach among his neighbors! Festus, in bringing Paul before Agrippa and the chief men, says, addressing the latter; "I have brought him before you, and specially before thee, King Agrippa." Acts xxv. Was the apostle before the chief men or before Agrippa only? Again: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in word and doctrine." 1 Tim. v. Now if "especially" means what is affirmed in the objection, then Paul intended that only those who labored in word and doctrine were to have double honor, while those who ruled well were to have no honor at all! So when the apostle wrote to Timothy, "The cloak which I have left at Troas when thou comest, bring with thee and the books, but especially the parchments," he meant to say that he should be particularly careful to bring the parchments, and particularly careful to leave the cloak and books behind! Once more: "As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith," (or believers). Gal. vi. This is precisely the phraseology of the passage in review; and if, as is contended, "especially" there shows clearly that God is the Savior of *only* those who believe, then here it shows that we are to do good *only* to those who believe, or the household of faith!

Are those who employ this criticism willing to abide its issues, and adopt the conclusions in which it involves them? We think not; and we believe the passages quoted are sufficient to show how perfectly void it is of all force against the apostle's testimony "God is the Savior of all men."

Having examined the argument founded on the word "specially," we return to inquire what Paul intended by the language which he uses, "God is the Savior of all men," if all men are not actually saved. What is the sense, the meaning of the words, if *this* is not its meaning! It may be said that God is the Savior of all men, inasmuch as he has made ample provisions for the salvation of all, and offers salvation to all, if they will accept it.

But let us look at this reply, and see if it meets the difficulty. How can it be shown that the offer of salvation makes God the Savior of those who are lost?—Does the offer of salvation save them? Surely not, else they would not be lost.—He can be the Savior of those only who are saved; and the offer of salvation to all, and every possible provision for it, cannot

in any conceivable way, make God Savior of all, if all do not accept the offer, and use the means. And yet there stands the testimony that God is actually the "Savior of all men."

Again then, we repeat the question. What did Paul mean, when he said, "God is the Savior of all men?" If he uttered these words understandingly, then in some way or other, God is actually the Savior of all men. And we ask in what way, if any portion of mankind are finally and irredeemably lost? How is he, how can he be the Savior of those whom he does not save? Reader, will you answer this to your own judgment? Will you explain the unqualified language of Paul in harmony with that doctrine, which as unqualifiedly declares God is *not* the Savior of all men?

In the meantime, we will endeavor to set forth briefly the doctrine of the passage. "We trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe." At first glance, it will be seen there are two kinds of salvation spoken of, one of which is common to all men, and the other a special salvation enjoyed by believers only, and that through faith or belief. We come to inquire then,

1st. What is the common salvation in which all men are partakers, or in accomplishing which, God is said to be the "Savior of all men?"

The answer to this question may be found in such inspired testimony as follows: "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself, by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Col. i. To the same purport is the following: "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." Ephes. i. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." John xii. "For the creature (or creation, being the same original word rendered "creation" in verse 22) was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature (or creation) itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Rom. viii. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. xv.) "Neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels: and are the children of God, being children of the resurrection." Matt. xxii. Luke xx.

Other testimonies might be added, but these are sufficient to set forth the nature of the common salvation whereof all are partakers—sufficient to show in what respect God is "the Saviour of all men." They unfold to us the glorious plan of redeeming grace and love, and the ground upon which rest the fulfilment of that plan. They reveal the final deliverance of human race from the bondage of sin and death, the reconciliation of all souls to the Father, and the restoration of perfect harmony to the moral universe. The common salvation which comes